

THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN FRANCE

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Political opinion in France is divided into a number of groups, as follows: Royalists or Monarchists, Imperialists, Bonapartists, Catholic Conservatives, Progressist Republicans, Nationalists, Radicals, Socialist Radicals, Reformatory Socialists (*Socialistes réformistes*), Revolutionary Socialists, and Anarchists.

The Royalists or Monarchists are constantly decreasing in number and influence. For more than half a century France has not had a king. Since 1830 no member of the royal family of Bourbons, and since 1848 no Orleanist, has sat upon the throne. Thus the average Frenchman of the present generation cannot conceive, or at least can conceive only with difficulty, a king reigning over France. At most, those who were men before 1870 can imagine France governed by an emperor, by a Bonaparte. They have known an emperor; consequently they can imagine him. To the younger generation the monarchistic or imperialistic idea seems odd. Among the young men the only ones who are still Royalists or Imperialists are so through family tradition. They believe that they must inherit from their fathers their political opinions as well as their revenues and their names.

At the general election of 1898 the number of Monarchists and Bonapartists could be estimated approximately at 1,300,000; that is, 10.6 per cent. of all the electors. It is necessary to note here that all the figures presented in this article are roughly approximate, and must never be considered as having an absolute value. They have been obtained by copying the returns given by the papers at the time of the elections. Sometimes the papers would give wrong figures; at other times they would forget to give all the votes, or all those registered. Often they would report inaccurately the party affiliations of the candidates, whom they would represent as being Socialists or Socialist Radicals,

Radicals or Progressist Republicans, Nationalists or Monarchists. The figures in themselves have, therefore, only questionable value, but as the causes of error are the same for every shade of opinion, it seems to us that the proportion resulting from them gives a fair idea of the division of the parties.

In 1902 there were new parliamentary elections, in which the number of votes cast for Monarchists and Imperialists was reduced to 970,000; or 9 per cent. of the total number of electors, which was then 10,800,000. This is still a high figure. It does not, however, exactly represent the real opinion of those included in it. Indeed, in many electoral circuits, especially in the country, the candidate is voted for, not because his political opinions are such and such, but because he is Mr. So-and-so, because he is a great landowner or manufacturer in the district, or because he is rich and spends money freely at the time of the elections. To form a correct idea of the political situation in France, one must take into consideration the fact that political interest is not at all intense among the peasants. The farmer generally cares little about politics, his only concerns being of a material nature. For a long time the rural population was Bonapartistic and imperialistic, because their economic condition was good under the empire. Now, under the republic, however, their prosperity is just as great; and that is why today a majority of the peasants are devoted to the republic. The countryman is a republican even when he votes for the Royalist or the Bonapartist, the rich man of the district. Still another cause which contributes toward maintaining a rural majority for republicanism is the inertia of the farmers. They do not like to change the existing order of things. They have grown used to the republic, and they wish to keep it. If the large landowner of the region is a Royalist, they will vote for him because they know him, and because they voted for his father, his uncle, and his father-in-law. He would be elected as well if he were a Radical.

These reservations must be made if the reader is to understand the relativity of the figures quoted in this article, and is to get a just appreciation of the division of parties in France.

The Royalists are the partisans of a king, and that king is for

them the Duke of Orleans, the great-grandson of Louis Philippe I. Of him it is known that he is married to an archduchess of Austria, and that he has no children. He is immensely wealthy, his fortune being estimated at 50,000,000 francs. He is banished from France and lives abroad, by virtue of the law of exile for the pretenders. He has always busied himself more with his private affairs than with politics. He maintains, however, a political bureau in Paris, which keeps him informed and issues orders to the Royalist papers of Paris and the provinces. These papers are very few. Many which were formerly Royalist are now Progressist Republican or Nationalist, and are enlisted for the republic.

The Royalist papers of Paris are *La Gazette de France*, *Le Gaulois*, *Le Moniteur universel*, and *Le Soleil*, though the last-named generally masks its royalism. As a rule, these papers have no great circulation. *La Gazette de France* does not issue more than four or five thousand copies. It is the official organ of the party, and expresses the views of Charles Maurras—a man of about forty, and a writer of great talent. His dream was to regenerate royalism with new social ideas, especially reforms in the relations between employers and employees. His efforts have not been successful. The other Royalist papers did not come to the support of his theories, which they deemed revolutionary. They held to the purest conservatism, being more or less avowed adversaries of all social reforms along democratic lines, and confining their program solely to a propaganda for a monarchical form of government which would maintain the existing social order, with its well-marked social hierarchy. To this class belongs *Le Gaulois*, the official organ of the nobility. Its circulation amounts to some 15,000 copies. Its leading writer is Arthur Meyer, an Israelite, who was born in humble circumstances, but is now rich. A few years ago he abjured his religion and was baptized. Recently he was married to Mademoiselle de Turenne, who is nearly forty years younger than himself. *Le Moniteur universel* exists only in name. As regards *Le Soleil*, it was formerly the organ of liberal royalism, but apparently tends to give up royalism and to label itself “Liberal Republican.” The

reason for this change of front, which has likewise been made by a number of other papers, is the fact that public opinion is felt to be drifting away from royalism. Thus the paper has sacrificed the name of "Royalist" in order to go on defending conservative principles behind the screen of a "republican" label. The circulation of *Le Moniteur* is 20,000.

In short, the Royalist party is becoming weaker every day. It tends to disappear and give place to a great Catholic Conservative party, which, though accepting the republic, wants it to be conservative. This is styled the "Liberal Republican" party.

The Imperialists and Bonapartists are also continually losing ground, though they are more active than the Royalists. Their candidate is Victor Napoleon—a man about forty years of age and of moderate intelligence. He is living in Brussels, in modest surroundings. He is unmarried, although rumor has married him morganatically to a countess who has borne him several children. It has been said that his brother Louis, who is a general in the Russian army, is likewise a pretender. This may be true, although he has always denied it. In 1900 there was a Bonapartist plot. M. Demagny, the secretary of Waldeck-Rousseau, then minister of the interior, was bought. There was no attempt at a *coup d'état*, perhaps because public opinion was warned by a few papers—among them *L'Humanité nouvelle*, in an article which caused a great sensation. It is possible that the present disturbance, the object of which is to prevent the army and the civic functionaries from being republican, is the work of the Bonapartists, who are inviting a last assault.

There are in the demands of the Imperialists certain democratic elements which would give this party a better chance than the Royalists have of getting the sympathy of the public. We must, however, distinguish between two tendencies among the Bonapartists. One is democratic, the other conservative. Those who are influenced by the latter tend toward royalism. They follow *L'Autorité*, the organ of Paul de Cassagnac, who died recently. Cassagnac was a journalist of great talent and an energetic polemic. He it was who, with his daily article, made *L'Autorité* an influential organ, its circulation reaching 40,000

copies. We gravely doubt that the Imperialist organ will long survive its director. It is certain that it will lose the greater part of its readers, even if it does not entirely disappear.

At all events, the Royalist and Imperialist parties are both dying out. Day by day their power decreases. They have no particular ideal, simply wanting to maintain the present social order. This they have in common with the great Catholic Liberal Conservative party, which gives itself the name "Liberal Republican." This latter party is ever growing stronger, absorbing little by little both Royalists and Imperialists. It is recruited especially from the ranks of the nobility—that nobility which did not, in spite of all, persist in its royalism and imperialism—and also from the higher and middle strata of the bourgeoisie. Catholics, Protestants, and Jews alike make up its rank and file. They are not all believers, but they all agree in considering religion a useful instrument in the hands of the government. Religion is necessary for the people.

The political program of this party in formation is maintenance of the republic, but a conservative republic, different from a parliamentary monarchy only in that a president is substituted for the king. However, from a social standpoint its program is different from that of the Royalists. It desires to ameliorate the condition of the proletarians; it advocates protective laws for work and wages, laws of insurance, and provision for old-age pensions. Nevertheless, it wants to keep the working class of town and country under obedience to the rich, to the capitalist manufacturers and the landowners; it wants to keep the proletarians in a state of social inferiority to the wealthy classes. The proletarians must stand in the same relation to the latter as children to their father.

The names commonly given to the members of the Liberal Republican party vary according to the different factions. They are called by turns "Ralliés," "Cæsarians" "Christian Democrats," "Social Catholics," "Liberal Republicans," "Nationalists," "Anti-Semites," "Catholic Conservatives" (*Conservateurs catholiques*), and "Progressist Republicans," etc.

The "Ralliés" are the Royalists or Bonapartists of former

times who accept the republic, being unable to kill it. The "Cæsarians" are Imperialists. Victor Napoleon is their Cæsar, but if this Cæsar will not come and reign over them, they are ready to accept anyone else, so great is their longing for an emperor. "Nationalist" is a name born of the Dreyfus affair, which severed all party ties and mixed men together regardless of political groupings. They are, however, now beginning to separate, and to align themselves according to policies and affinities. The Nationalists are recruited, in large part, from the elements which constituted Boulangism. They have no definite program, because they are such a miscellaneous collection. They loudly proclaim their "love of country and militarism." Many of them were Anti-Semites; some of them, but a constantly decreasing number, are Socialists; and all of them were "Anti-Dreyfusards." Their principal organs in Paris are *La Patrie*, *La Presse*, *L'Écho de Paris*, *L'Éclair*, *L'Intransigeant*, and *Le Petit Journal*. *La Patrie* issues 90,000 copies daily. Its manager, Émile Massard, is at present a member of the Municipal Council of Paris. Some twenty years ago he was a Revolutionary Socialist, as were Jules Guesde and Paul Lafargue. M. Millevoye, the Nationalist deputy, who was formerly a Bonapartist, is its editor-in-chief. *La Presse* has a circulation of 70,000. These two papers are much read in the evening in Paris. Both of them belong to Jules Jaluzot, the Liberal Republican deputy, who is one of the principal owners of the great dry-goods house of "Le Printemps." *L'Écho de Paris*, managed by Henri Simond, who became a millionaire through his marriage to the widow of M. Récipon, has a circulation of 100,000 copies. It is a very well-written paper, with an able editorial staff. *L'Éclair*, nominally managed by M. Sabatier, but now owned by M. Jubet, formerly editor of *Le Petit Journal*, is in reality the work of Alphonse Humbert and G. Montorgueil. The former is editorially responsible and dictates the politics of the paper. He is an ex-president of the Municipal Council of Paris, and an ex-deputy. Upon the suppression of the Commune in 1871, he was condemned and sent to prison, where he remained ten years. *L'Éclair* has a daily sale of more than 100,000 copies. It is one of the best

Parisian newspapers. *L'Intransigeant* is managed by Henry Rochefort. This old war-horse is as full of spirit as ever, and as fiery as a youth. His peculiar controversial style, which, though witty, is not very deep, does, however, not now please the multitude as much as it formerly did, and the number of copies daily issued by the paper does not exceed 70,000, while fifteen years ago it was double and even sometimes triple that number. *Le Petit Journal* is read especially for its miscellaneous news, its general information, and its serial stories. Its sale is 1,000,000 copies.

The Anti-Semites flourished especially between 1890 and 1900. Now there are very few of them left—I mean of those who proclaim themselves to be such; because, in spite of himself, every Frenchman is prejudiced against a Jew. The Anti-Semitic program was very simple: fight the Jews and expel them. Beyond that, it varied with the different individuals. All shades of political opinion were represented, from Royalism to Socialism. The official organ of Anti-Semitism is *La Libre Parole*, the circulation of which has now fallen to 70,000 copies, after having exceeded 200,000. This paper was founded by Edouard Drumont, who is still its manager. It is his paper, it subsists only through him, and it is for him alone that it is read. Edouard Drumont is a writer of talent, whose numerous political and social works, written between 1880 and 1895, exercised a notable influence upon the young men of that time. Though a deputy from 1898 to 1902, his influence has been decreasing ever since.

The “Christian Democrats” or “Social Catholics” are few in number. They advocate social reforms with socialistic tendencies, but they also want the supremacy of the church and religion. The social program of the French Christian Democrats is not so well-defined as that of the Belgian party of the same name. They differ from the Catholic Conservatives only in that they desire social reforms in which more emphasis is laid upon democratic principles. They publish an organ in Paris, *Le Peuple français*, the editor of which is the Abbé Garnier. It is in Paris and in the North that the Christian Democrats are most active; but without a great degree of success, especially in Paris. The central part of the country is too far advanced for such influences.

The Christian Democracy would, however, find very fertile soil for the spread of its doctrines in the West, in Brittany, where the clergy are still powerful; but it has not as yet extended its activity to that region, and if later on it should desire to do so, it may be too late, as the ground will then have been occupied by the Socialists.

The Catholic Conservatives are old Monarchists and Imperialists who care more for the clerical than for the royal power, and would be satisfied if they could be masters of the republic and govern it so as to maintain the principles of a social hierarchy. They are quite willing to improve the condition of the humble, but they propose to do this through charity, and not through the principle of equity. The church is for them a spiritual as well as a temporal power, which must govern souls from all points of view. This pre-eminence belongs to her by right. These Catholic Conservatives have numerous points of contact with the Christian Democrats or Social Catholics. The leaders of the movement are generally members of religious orders — Jesuits, Franciscans, and Dominicans — or laymen belonging to the “Third Order” of the Franciscans or Jesuits.

This “Third Order” possesses a very strong organization. Its membership is composed of women as well as men. It has local groups, with a president, a secretary, and a treasurer. The president merely communicates with a sort of directing committee, which works on the mass of the initiated through him. It is therefore difficult to know the leaders, who are generally Jesuit or Franciscan friars. Nor are the lay members, as a rule, known. It was said — and it is probably true — that the Comte de Mun, a deputy, and Admiral de Cuverville, among others, are members of the Third Order. Among the vanguard of Jesuits who are supposed to have a leading influence we may mention Fathers Dulac and de Pascal; and among the Dominican friars, Fathers Maumus and Olivier. The religious congregations having a secret organization, there is no proof that those whose names are given to the public are the real leaders of Catholic politics. These may very well be persons quite unknown to the public. One fact is certain — that in a great number of the departments of France,

ever since the dispersion of the religious orders, there has been a Jesuit father who is closely mixed up in politics and seems to give the keynote in the Conservative concert. Besides, the Jesuits have divested themselves of their former frocks to become secular priests. Such men are, in two of the departments of Brittany, the Jesuits de Sesmaisons and Le Mareschal. Another thing that is certain is that in the general conduct of Catholic politics the secular clergy — archbishops, bishops, and rectors — have a very small share. The power is entirely in the hands of the regular clergy and laymen.

The Catholic Conservatives possess several papers in Paris. These are *L'Univers et le Monde*, *La Vérité française*, and *La Croix*. The latter is represented in the provinces by numerous other *Croix*, as the principal town of nearly every department has a *Croix* of its own, which often bears the name of the department; for instance, *La Croix des côtes du Nord*. The circulation of *La Croix* is considerable, both in Paris and in the provinces, and is said to exceed 1,500,000 copies. The price of all these papers — Imperialist, Royalist, Nationalist, and Social Catholic — is generally one cent (five centimes). *Le Gaulois* and *La Gazette de France* are sold at three cents.

Besides their daily in Paris, the political parties have a number of papers in the provinces which are published one, two, or three times a week. These provincial papers are read by only a narrow circle. They often reproduce the leading articles of Drumont, Paul de Cassagnac, Rochefort, and other leading journalists. Thus, some Parisian papers with a small circulation have more influence than those with a large issue. The Parisian paper penetrates relatively little into the country, because the peasant, as a rule, does not read much, partly through economy and partly because he has not acquired an interest in reading.

In addition to their daily press, the political parties control several periodicals. The Nationalists have *Les Annales de la Patrie française* and *L'Action française*, in which latter Charles Maurras and Vaugeois, both Royalists, write. The Catholic Conservatives and Social Catholics have *Les Études*, published by the Jesuits; *La Revue thomiste*, published by the Dominicans; *La*

Quinzaine, edited by M. Fonssagrive; *Le Correspondant*, the beautiful Liberal Catholic review; and *La Réforme sociale* and *La Science sociale*, two periodicals which defend the sociological theories of Le Play. Some of these periodicals have a large circulation; *Le Correspondant*, for instance, prints 15,000 copies, and *La Quinzaine* 8,000. The last two of the above-mentioned have a very small circulation. *Les Études* and *La Revue thomiste* are rather abstruse in their treatment of political subjects, and philosophy occupies a large share of their space. *Le Correspondant* and *La Quinzaine* are periodicals of general interest which devote much attention to the politics of the day.

The shades of opinion of the parties are sometimes so little differentiated and so numerous that it is difficult to estimate the number of their adherents. The total number of Catholic Conservatives, Social Catholics, Nationalists, Anti-Semites, and "Ralliés" may be roughly given as 2,325,000.

The Liberal Republican or Progressist Republican party is wealthy, composed, as it is, principally of rich manufacturers, merchants, financiers, and big landowners, who for traditional or other reasons cannot belong to any of the other factions of the great Liberal party in formation. Naturally enough, all those depending upon the great capitalists follow them in their political opinions. The membership of this party may be estimated at 1,675,000. It is, above all, conservative. It is quite willing to improve the conditions of the workingmen and the peasants through protective labor laws or a tariff, but it has no wish whatever to undertake any of the great social reforms which the Socialist Radical and Socialist parties demand. One may say that the only difference between the Progressist Republicans and the Catholic Conservatives or "Ralliés" is that republicanism is of older date with the former than with the latter.

The Progressist Republicans possess a number of influential papers, such as *Le Figaro*, *Le Journal des Débats*, *La Liberté*, *Le Soir*, and *La République française*. *Le Figaro*, edited by Gaston Calmette, has now lost the importance it formerly had. Its political influence would be a negligible quantity, were it not for its numerous foreign readers, who still see in it what it once was,

but is no longer — namely, the great organ of France, we may even say of Paris, *par excellence*. Its sale is 32,000 copies, at three cents each. *Le Journal des Débats*, edited by M. de Naleche, is always admirably written, but its circulation is very small — only four or five thousand copies. It is more serious and less worldly than *Le Figaro*, and sells at two cents. *La Liberté* is edited by M. Berthoulat, a Progressist Republican deputy, and its chief contributor is Maurice Spronck, another Nationalist deputy. The number of copies published is 22,000, sold at one cent. It is an evening paper, very seriously written, with a good news service and a capable editorial staff. *La République française* was formerly edited by Jules Méline, the well-known Progressist Republican deputy. M. Latapie is now filling his place. The political shade of this paper is always the same. Its circulation is seven or eight thousand. Of *Le Soir* we shall say nothing, as it is read only in Paris, by financiers and politicians.

Le Temps, the daily sale of which amounts to 33,000 copies, sold at three cents, has M. Hement, a Jew, for its editor-in-chief. Its position is somewhat different from that of the other Progressist newspapers. Although it is not Radical, its opposition to the Combes cabinet was only intermittent, though the latter showed decidedly Radical proclivities. It was even often employed as the semi-official organ of the cabinet. It is an evening paper, with a good domestic and foreign news service, and is the great source from which the other Parisian and provincial papers borrow, thus reducing their expenses for news to a minimum.

Conservative Republicanism is defended by numerous periodicals: *La Revue des Deux Mondes*, *La Revue politique et parlementaire*, and sometimes also *La Revue de Paris*, which is open to Radical doctrine. The old and celebrated *Revue des Deux Mondes* is managed by M. Brunetière, whose Catholic tendencies are well known. It has tended, and is still tending, toward the Catholic Conservative party — a fact which has served to prejudice many readers against it. The number of its subscribers probably does not now reach 20,000, while formerly it had a large circulation. *Le Bulletin politique*, which is con-

sistently Conservative Republican, is edited by Francis Charmes, a politician of great ability. *La Revue politique et parlementaire*, edited by M. Fournier, has a much smaller circulation. It sometimes accepts articles written by Radicals, but it clearly prefers the ideas of Republican Conservatism represented in Parliament by M. Méline and M. Ribot. *La Revue de Paris* contains few studies in French home politics, and those published are usually of a Progressist Republican color.

All the political groups last mentioned tend to merge into a single party, a great Republican Conservative party. The number of their adherents aggregates approximately 4,970,000. They do not call for any thoroughgoing social transformation: neither the separation of church and state, nor an income tax, nor the socialization of industries and means of transportation. Though they accept the principle of protective laws for the working class, they want to frame the laws so that the workman will always remain under the guardianship of the state. Above all they are conservative. In the country they organize lectures and various associations of men and women, such as "L'Action liberale," "La Ligue de la Patrie française," "La Ligue anti-sémitique," and "Le Grand Occident de France." The two last-named are wasting away and retain only nominal existence. It was the Grand Occident of France which was responsible for the famous siege in Paris during the ministry of Waldeck-Rousseau. Its instigator was Jules Guérin, who was convicted by the Supreme Court in 1899, and is now living in Brussels. The women make house-to-house canvasses, especially in the small towns and in the country, among both the poor and the rich, to collect funds for the political, and particularly for the electoral, campaigns. The Republican Conservative party is notably richer, and disposes of much more money, than its opponents. This may be easily understood when it is remembered that the majority of the capitalists—manufacturers, merchants, financiers, landowners—belong to this party.

Opposed to the Conservative party stands the great party, also in formation, of political and social reform. This party is composed of the Radicals, the Socialist Radicals, the Reformatory

Socialists, and the Revolutionary Socialists. Besides these, there are the Communistic Anarchists.

The Communistic Anarchists are few in number, but include several eminent personalities, and through their propaganda wield a great influence among the trades-unionists of the labor exchanges (*bourses de travail*). They spread their doctrine by means of weekly papers and lectures. *Les Temps nouveaux*, *L'Ennemi du Peuple*, and *Le Libertaire*, with Jean Grave, P. Delesale, Charles Albert, and Giraud as the leading writers, are the principal Anarchist organs. Besides, there spring up from time to time ephemeral papers which disappear soon after seeing the light. The principal lecturers are Sébastien Faure and Giraud. Lately the Anarchists are often called "Libertarians." The anarchistic movement is no longer talked about as it used to be, and the intellectual class does not follow it as it formerly did. Some of its most active agitators, like Émile Fouget, who was creator and editor of the famous *Père Peinard*, have gone over to trades-unionism. M. Pouget is now one of the editors of *La Voix du Peuple*, the organ of the General Federation of Labor at the Labor Exchange of Paris. Here exists an active center of "Libertarian Socialism." Its influence is felt by all trades-unionists, who are thus kept away from the electoral strife, and from the political parties of the Reformatory and the Revolutionary Socialists. In short, except for a few scattered individuals among the intellectuals, one may say that there are not now any Communistic Anarchists. But the doctrines of liberty, of libertarian organizations, have pervaded the labor and socialistic circles; and thus we are in the presence of a strong libertarian movement toward a freely organized society.

The Radical Republicans, or simply Radicals, are the strongest group of the Reform party now in formation. Their number may be estimated at 2,780,000. The Socialist Radicals do not number more than 1,890,000. It is especially from the southern, eastern, and central parts of France that the ranks of the Radicals and Socialist Radicals are recruited. In the West, the North, and the Northwest the people are prevailing conservative. There are, however, a few centers of Socialists, both Reformatory and

Revolutionary, in some regions of Normandy, Brittany, and Picardy. The Socialist groups are many, well disciplined, and active in French Flanders, the Artois, the central provinces (Berry, etc.), the East (Bourgogne, Ardennes), Provence, and also in Bordelais and Languedoc.

The Radical newspapers are *Le Gil Blas*, with a sale of 10,000 copies, edited by MM. Périvier and Ollendorf, and with Ernest Charles as editorial writer; *Le Matin*, with a sale of 600,000 copies, and with Charles Laurent, Harduin, and ex-Captain Humbert as its chief contributors; *Le Petit Parisien*, which belongs to Pierre Dupuis, a deputy and former minister, 1,500,000 copies of which are issued daily; and *Le Radical*, which publishes 48,000 copies. *Le Radical* is edited by M. Maujan, a deputy, and belongs to Victor Simond, the owner of *L'Aurore*, the Socialist Radical paper of M. Clemenceau. It was formerly edited by Henry Maret, a deputy, who is now a contributor to *Le Rappel*. The circulation of the latter is 20,000 copies; its manager is Charles Bos; it is Radical, though in practice dissenting from the politics of the Radical party, as it was opposed to the Combes ministry. The same may be said of *Le Siècle*, edited by M. de Lanessan, the minister of marine in the cabinet of Waldeck-Rousseau. The chief contributor to this paper is M. Cornely, who ten years ago was still a Royalist and a Catholic. We may add to this list of Radical papers *Le Signal*, the organ of the Protestant church, and consequently very clerical.

The Socialist Radical newspapers are *La Lanterne*, which is first and foremost an anti-clerical paper, and has a circulation of 42,000; and *L'Aurore*, the sale of which does not exceed 28,000 copies, though its editor, Georges Clemenceau, is perhaps the most remarkable politician of France.

We have been talking so far only of the Parisian press. In the provinces there is a veritable swarm of papers. Each departmental capital, each big town, possesses several daily, bi-weekly, or tri-weekly papers, of the most diverse opinions. We have seen that there exist a whole provincial series of *Croix*, the organs of the Catholics. We might also have mentioned a similar series of *Nouvellistes*, found in many cities, and affiliated with the Con-

servative party; also a number of papers, of rather small circulation, but of considerable influence in their respective regions. Most of these dailies are Progressist Republican. Sometimes, however, they show tendencies toward a more advanced position.

The organs of Radicalism in the provinces are many and difficult to enumerate. They include one or two monthly and weekly reviews, but have much difficulty in maintaining themselves, as their circulation is limited. Radicalism has also smaller organs of propaganda, such as *Les Annales de la Jeunesse laïque*, with a circulation of nearly 10,000—a small monthly review appealing especially to a public of school-teachers; *Pages libres*, edited by Charles Guieysse, whose Socialistic and even Anarchistic tendencies are much marked; and *Les Cahiers de la Quinzaine*, which, like the preceding, is more Socialistic than Radical, and is edited by M. Peguy.

Every year the Radical and Socialist Radical parties hold a general congress, where all the delegates of the groups that follow Radicalism meet. Frequently these groups are electoral committees which live only during the period of the election. They have but a small number of members, and sometimes the delegate appoints himself. The Radical party has no such organization as the Socialist party. The Radical and Socialist Radical congress appoints from among its members an executive committee. Recently the president of this committee was M. Berteaux, a deputy who served as minister of war in the Combes cabinet. Its president is now Jean Bourrat, a deputy. The difference between the Socialist Radicals and the Radicals lies in the varying degree of emphasis which they place upon democratic reform.

As we have already seen, French conservatism has a live organ in the "Third Order." Radicalism possesses a similar organ in Freemasonry, represented especially by the "Grand Orient of France." It is difficult to ascertain the numbers in this secret association. It is known that they are divided into lodges, each of which has a president, who is styled "Venerable," and several other officers. There may be several lodges in the same town, according to its importance. The Freemasons of the Grand Orient of France hold an annual convention. Though secret, this

convention was freely discussed in the press this year. It appoints a permanent council, which is charged with the direction of French Masonic affairs. This council is called the "Council of Order." Its president is M. Lafferre, a deputy and a barrister. Besides the Grand Orient of France, and in friendly relations with it, there are the "Grand Lodge of France" and the "Supreme Council" for France and its dependencies. These constitute what is commonly called the "Scottish Rite." It appears that the influence of the Scottish Rite Masons is less than that of the Grand Orient, whose lodges cover the whole country.

Republicans of all shades of opinion live harmoniously side by side in these Masonic lodges. M. Bonnet, the orator of the last convention, said in his speech, as reported by the newspapers: "We are the only association—and we are proud and happy to say so—where moderate but true Republicans, Radicals, Socialist Radicals, Socialists, and Libertarians discuss together all the political, economic, and social problems." It seems, however, from what is known of the lodges, that the great majority of Freemasons are Radicals, with a Socialist minority in Paris, Marseilles, and other large cities. As for Libertarians and Anarchists, their number is very small.

The tendencies and program of Freemasonry may be considered as those of the Radical and Socialist Radical parties. The Grand Orient of France is unanimously anti-clerical. Its members one and all demand the separation of church and state. Once this goal has been attained—and it has the first place upon its program—it will work for the political "purification" of the state functionaries; that is, the appointment to government positions of such persons only as have proved themselves to be good republicans. It desires a state monopoly of all elementary instruction, thus completely debarring the clergy from teaching. It favors laws increasing the liberty of citizens with respect to divorce, the press, etc. It advocates democratic legislation, improving the condition of the working classes in city and country, making taxes weigh more heavily upon the rich than upon the poor, providing for old-age pensions, introducing an inheritance and an income tax, fixing a weekly holiday, etc. Aside

from the question of the separation of church and state, and the destruction of the last remnant of the political power of the church, the Freemasons are, however, not entirely agreed on all of these points, some favoring a more thoroughgoing scheme of democratic reform than others.

We must also mention the National Association of Free-thinkers of France, with Ferdinand Buisson, a deputy, as its president. In this association we find Radicals, Socialists, and Anarchists of both sexes. The Grand Orient of France is not open to women. The Association of Freethinkers has members scattered all over the country. Some of these have organized local groups. Their number is still restricted—4,500—the association being quite young. Its purpose is to search for truth, the liberation of minds from all confessional practices, and the laicization of education and morals.

Socialism is divided into two great factions—the Revolutionary Socialists and the Reformatory Socialists. The official name of the former is the “Socialist Party of France;” the latter is called the “French Socialist Party.” The former is known by the initials of the French title, P. S. D. F.; the latter, as P. S. F. Each of these parties holds an annual congress, and is managed by a committee of delegates appointed by this congress or by the district federations of the group. The groups are many, and those of the P. S. D. F. are well organized and strong. The membership of the P. S. D. F. is recruited chiefly from the northern, central, and southeastern parts of France, and from Paris; that of the P. S. F. is scattered all over the country. Independent of these two organized factions, there are the “Revolutionary Socialist Labor Party” (*Parti Ouvrier socialiste révolutionnaire*, P. O. S. R.), and the “Breton Socialist Federation” (*Fédération socialiste bretonne*, F. S. B.). All these groups together comprise about 1,200,000 members, of whom nearly 425,000 are in the P. S. D. F. Their ideal is the same: the transformation of the present capitalistic division of property into a social division; that is, into collective or common ownership. The difference is in their tactics. And yet, when one examines the policies carefully, they are more different in form than in substance.

The Reformatory Socialists propose to transform society through slow and successive steps, gaining incessantly on the capitalistic state. They are inclined toward an alliance with the Radical and Socialist Radical parties, so as to secure a governmental majority, and lead the government on a more and more democratic and socialistic road. They therefore accept compromises and somewhat modify their ideal. The Revolutionary Socialists, on the other hand, are opposed to any form of alliance or union. They want a party independent of all others, preach incessantly the socialistic ideal, and concern themselves about reform only to the extent of accepting them when they emanate from the bourgeois groups, using them as a means for exacting more. They depend on the revolution to transform society, and that transformation must be complete as well as sudden.

The truth is that this difference in tactics is more apparent than real, as all the Socialist members of Parliament support the present government. Ever since the International Congress at Amsterdam, each faction is doing its utmost to effect a union with the other. If they succeed—which we rather doubt—there will be but one Socialist party in France.

The leaders of the P. S. D. F. are Jules Guesdes, Paul Lafargue, and Dubreuilh, without mentioning those who sit in Parliament. The leaders of the P. S. F. are nearly all deputies, except Fournière and Paul Brousse, who is a member of the Municipal Council of Paris.

The Socialists draw their recruits chiefly from the ranks of the workingmen of the cities, and from the young professors and school-teachers. There are also a few Socialist groups among the peasants and the vine-dressers of the Southwest, and in Brétagne-Vendée.

There are in Paris three Socialistic dailies: *L'Action*, edited by Henry Bérenger, which has a circulation of 60,000, is intimately associated with Freemasonry, and consequently has Radical tendencies; *La Petite République*, edited by Gérault Richard, a deputy, which has a sale of 72,000 copies; and *L'Humanité*, the organ of Jean Jaurès, which has a circulation of 15,000. There are no dailies belonging to the Revolutionary

Socialist parties. The official organ of the P. S. D. F. is *Le Socialiste*, a weekly newspaper which attacks, at times quite vehemently, the Reformatory Socialists, whom it calls "Confusionary Socialists." In the provinces there are many daily and weekly papers, such as *Le Reveil du Nord* (Lille), *Le Bréton socialiste* (Morlaix), etc. There are three Socialistic periodicals: *Le Mouvement socialiste*, edited by Hubert Lagardelle, which leans toward the P. S. D. F.; *La Vie sociale*, edited by F. de Pressensé, a deputy; and *La Revue socialiste*, the manager of which is Gustave Rouanet, a deputy. The two latter have close relations with the P. S. F.

Such is the present situation of the political parties in France. The means of propaganda of which they all make use, aside from the newspapers, are lectures and public meetings. The Catholics and Socialists add to this pamphlets sold for one or two cents apiece.

The political situation of the country is reflected in the Chamber of Deputies. The majority that supported the Combes ministry from 1902 to 1905 was composed of different groups, namely: the "Democratic Union," led by M. Étienne; the "Radical Left," led by M. Sarrien; the "Socialist Radical Left," led by Bienvenu Martin; the "Group of Independent Socialists," with Jean Jaurès, Aristide Briand, and F. de Pressensé as leaders; and the "Group of Revolutionary Socialists," with Édouard Vaillant and Marcel Sembat as leaders. The majority was about thirty votes. Besides these groups there were the so-called "Dissenting Radicals," who were anxious to hold the portfolios in the new cabinet, and did not hesitate to form an alliance with the Conservatives of all shades in order to fight the ministry of M. Combes.

M. Combes, who is seventy-two years old, was appointed president of the council in 1902, after the resignation of the ministry of Waldeck-Rousseau. He thus held office nearly three years. His cabinet was not very homogeneous, as it contained Moderate Republicans, such as Rouvier (finance), Chaumié (public instruction), and Vallé (justice), as well as Socialist

Radicals, like Pelletan (marine) and Berteaux (war). In spite of this lack of homogeneity, the Combes cabinet resisted all the combined attacks of the Right (Liberal Catholic Republicans) and the Left (Dissenting Radicals). These were sometimes very violent.

The policy of M. Combes's cabinet was above all anti-clerical. He enforced the law of Waldeck-Rousseau against the religious congregations and the law forbidding these to teach. He broke off all diplomatic relations with the Holy See. He also paved the way for the separation of church and state, which will probably be passed by the Chamber before July, so that it may pass the Senate this year. We may therefore presume that the year 1906 will see the separation as an accomplished fact. There are some who doubt that there will be a majority for it in the Chamber, but we do not share this doubt. Parliament will pass the bill, because it realizes that public opinion demands it. Besides, the Radical papers, the Freemasons, and the groups of free thought are making an active propaganda to that end. The fight is carried on with eagerness on the part of the Radicals. On the Catholic side many wish the separation, hoping to use the liberty which will result to regain their lost power. M. Combes was in the habit of taking the hints given by these groups in the Chamber or in the country at large. The feature which most distinguished his régime from that of his predecessor was the fact that he did not have a personal policy, but that he took pains to find out in what direction lay the preference of the parliamentary majority and of the country, thus following the opinion of the nation instead of leading it. He did not oppose the forward march, nor did he promote it. During the thirty years or more that France has been a republic, his was the first really republican cabinet. The merit of M. Combes consists in realizing the aspirations of the majority and in executing its will.

The result of this policy was that great influence came to be vested in a few individuals and a few groups. It is certain that the Grand Orient of France had considerable influence over M. Combes personally, and consequently over the whole ministry. The committee composed of the delegates of the parliamentary groups

of the majority, of whom we have spoken above, exercised a powerful influence. It may perhaps be said that it was M. Jaurès alone who, thanks to the authority which he derived from his fame as an orator, directed the policy of M. Combes. One fact is certain, namely, that he saved the cabinet from defeat three or four times. Another source from which he draws his power springs from the fact that he represents the Socialist party—the only party which has an ideal, as was said by M. Ripert, a Conservative deputy, who added: “The Socialist Party is really the leader and master of our parliamentary policy.” Thus expressed, it is an exaggeration; but there can be no doubt that the Socialist party is a very influential factor in the guidance of the politics of France.

This is why the social reforms, such as laws for the protection of the working classes and the transformation of the present taxes into an income tax, are studied so zealously in Parliament. To be sure, this zeal is only relative, and does not satisfy many Socialists; which fact is easily explained when it is remembered that the complete understanding regarding the religious policy which prevails between the Radicals, Socialist Radicals, and Socialists does not extend to social reforms, with respect to which there are different, and even contrary, opinions. The result is that, while these reforms may be accomplished, it will be but slowly and gradually. Indeed, some of them, too socialistic in their tendencies, did not win a majority in Parliament. It seems probable, however, that the social laws will soon be passed: the reduction of the term of military service from three to two years, old-age pensions for workingmen, the law of weekly rest, the income tax, etc. Perhaps the present Chamber will not see these reforms carried through, its term expiring in May, 1906; but the next one will certainly carry out these measures.

In its religious policy the cabinet of M. Combes advanced with the Left toward emancipation from all state religion. In this it was clearly Radical. It was in accord with the country; for, in spite of the furious assaults of the opposition and the money used for propaganda, the by-elections nearly always gave the victory to the Radicals. The country is becoming Radical, and is gradu-

ally drifting toward Socialism. Already in 1898, writing of the parliamentary elections, we commented upon this fact in *L'Humanité nouvelle*. Even since then the fact has become more and more accentuated. Frequently, in the elections, the Royalist or Bonapartist gives place to a "Rallié" or a Catholic Republican, who himself makes room for a Progressist Republican, who in his turn is supplanted by a Radical. The Radical next sees his votes given to a Socialist Radical, who in turn has to give his seat to a Socialist. The Radical majority is gradually increasing, and little by little it is becoming impregnated with socialism. It may therefore be predicted that the future ministries, called to direct the affairs of France, will have a long life. They will find themselves in the presence of an opposition of the Right which will go on decreasing, and a majority in which the extreme Left, with its most advanced ideas, will continually increase in number. It may be presumed with a fair degree of certainty that the policy of France will tend more and more in a democratic and socialistic direction. Gradually it will give to the nation laws improving the condition of the working classes of city and country, increasing the civic liberties, reducing the burdens of the proletarians to shift them to the shoulders of the capitalists, and even socializing a few industries, such as railways, navigation, etc.

One may say, without fear of contradiction, that France, after thirty years as a nominal republic, has at last begun to realize the true republic, to the great satisfaction of the majority of her people.